

Adams-Mason House
1072 Thomas Jefferson Street, N.W.
Washington (Georgetown)
District of Columbia

HABS No. DC-161

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PHOTOGRAPHS
WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

Historic American Buildings Survey
Office of Archeology and Historic Preservation
National Park Service
801 19th Street, N.W.
Washington, D.C.

ADAMS-MASON HOUSE

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Location: 1072 Thomas Jefferson St., N.W. (Georgetown), Washington, D.C.; west side of street, beginning 120 feet from the corner of M Street.

Present Owner: Mrs. Gertrude E. Ochs, 1074 Thomas Jefferson St.

Present Occupant: Harold K Nelson (first floor)
Hugh F. Griffin (upper two floors)

Present Use: Double residence.

Statement of Significance: A little-altered frame house of about 1810.

PART I. HISTORICAL INFORMATION

A. Physical History:

1. Original and subsequent owners: The following information is an incomplete chain of title to the land on which this house was built. The site is Square 1198, lot 822, (old Square 28, old lot 59 including part of 58) in the original area of Georgetown. The references are all to the Recorder of Deeds, District of Columbia.

1780 Deed April 13, 1780
Richard Wootton et ux Martha
To
William Bayley
Lot 59 in Georgetown

1787 Deed May 5, 1787 recorded in
Liber TBH 2 folio 413
William Bayley and wife Susanna F.
To
George Digges
William Campbell
Transfers lot "60" (actually lot 59 is intended).

1796 Deed April 5, 1796 recorded April 8, 1796 in
Liber B folio 426
Robert Peter
To
Anthony Reintzel
"Part of lot 58 in Georgetown beginning at northeast corner of lot 57, (being eastwardly from the boundary #18, 134'9" and in the line of Bridge St.) and running

southwardly with lot 57 for the length of 331'6"
[i.e. to where the present Canal is] then with a line
drawn eastwardly parallel to the line of Bridge
St. [M] for the length of 62'4 1/2", then with a
line drawn northwardly parallel to the 1st line for
the length of 331'6" to the line of Bridge St. then
with said street westwardly 67' 4 1/2" to beginning....
Together with all the improvements, advantages and
appurtenances thereunto belonging." Consideration
£255.

1797 Right of Way January 8, 1797 recorded January 8, 1797 in
Liber B folio 619
Thomas Beatty Jr.

To
Corporation of Georgetown

"Beginning at the south side of Bridge Street at
the end of 239'6" in easterly direction from northwest
corner of Bridge Street and Fishing Lane and running
southerly parallel with Fishing Lane until it inter-
sects the north side of Causeway [K Street] easterly with
north side of causeway for the length of 60'; northerly
parallel with first line to Bridge Street; thence to
beginning." Beatty conveys as much of the above
ground as is included in his lot 59 for a public
highway (Thomas Jefferson Street). It appears,
however, that Beatty did not have title to this land.

1800 Deed April 4, 1800 recorded 16 July 1800 in
Liber E folio 315
William Bayley and wife Susanna F.

To
Notley Young
Clement Hill,
trustees of George Digges, dec.
and
William Campbell
(To correct the above deed).

1800 Deed April 10, 1800 recorded August 16, 1800 in
Liber E folio 317

Notley Young
Clement Hill
trustees of George Digges
To
Anthony Reintzell
All the undivided moiety of lot 59 conveyed to Young
and Hill by Bayley 4/4/1800.

- 1801 Deed December 6, 1800 recorded January 10, 1801 in
Liber F folio 163
William Campbell et ux Rebecca
To
Anthony Reintzell
Undivided moiety of lot 59; consideration 400 pounds.
- 1808 Deed January 6, 1808 recorded April 8, 1808 in
Liber T folio 254
Anthony Reintzell
To
Thomas Adams
"The portion of ground and premises hereby bargained
and sold.... Beginning at end of 150' southerly from
intersection of south side of Bridge Street and the
west side of Jefferson St. and running from thence
south with west side of Jefferson St. 28'-- west and
parallel to Bridge [M] Street 104'9"--north and
parallel with Jefferson St. 28'--east and parallel
with Bridge St. to beginning." This is exactly
lot 822. Consideration, \$560.
- 1809 Deed in Trust April 17, 1809 recorded May 17, 1809 in
Liber W22 folio 1
Thomas Adams
To
Richard Parrott
John Mountz Jr.
Part of lot 57 and lot 822 (28' x 104'9").
In trust "for money lent" to Thomas Adams (\$1500)
by Henry Foxall: "to have and to hold the said two
pieces or parcels of ground so as above described
together with the improvements on each belonging."
The land was to be sold in three years if the debt
was not paid.
- 1812 Deed April 10, 1812 recorded July 25, 1812 in
Liber AD folio 143
Richard Parrott
John Mountz Jr.
To
Henry Foxall
Sale under trust from Thomas Adams--\$3850
(same land as described W 22 folio 1.)
- 1823 Will of Henry Foxall, Will Book 3 folio 270 dated
April 12, 1823
Devised, subject to certain conditions, all his
estate to Jacob Hoffman, David English, Walter Smith

and Leonard Mackall--in trust to sell and partition the remainder after a certain period equally among his heirs.

By decree of Supreme Court, new trustees were appointed in place of above deceased:

Philip J. Berry

David English

William McK. Osborn

N.B. In the deed sorting all his property out (JAS folio 148-179) of January 20, 1858 (rec. January 21, 1858) there is no mention of this lot in the elaborate list prepared. It was possibly sold before 1823.

2. Date of erection: About 1810. Thomas Adams bought lot 822 for \$560 in 1808. In 1809 part of lot 57, and lot 822 (part of lot 59) were valued at \$1500, but when these same two parcels were sold in 1812 they brought \$3850. This indicates that a house probably improved the land by that time. In addition, the assessment records for 1800-07 (National Archives Microcopy 605, Group 351, roll 7) for Anthony Reintzell, who owned it at that time, indicate 'two lots on Jefferson St., \$1200' (second assessment) but are not improved. The assessment for Thomas Adams in 1808-12 (roll 8) notes 'part of 59, old town, improved, \$600'.
3. Architect: unknown.
4. Original plans, construction, etc.: None known.
5. Alterations and additions: Few changes. Light partition wall divides north hall from the room to the south. Two additions on the rear are from the later 19th century and are brick.
6. Important old views: The house is shown (essentially as it appears today) at the edge of a photo, early 20th century, in the Library of Congress, Pictorial Archives of Early American Architecture, No. DC/Geo/7-1. (photo-copy with this Data Book).

B. Historical Events Connected with the Structure:

1. Biographical note on Notley Young:

Among the prominent citizens of Washington and Georgetown Notley Young is one of the most significant. He is occasionally found as a trustee in a deed, such as that of 1800

(Liber E, folio 315) in which, as one of the trustees of George Digges, he conveys lot 59, on which 1072 Jefferson Street now stands, and further south, the Masonic Lodge No. 5.

The following quoted material is from Historic Houses of George-Town & Washington City, by H. D. Eberlein and C. V. Hubbard (Richmond, 1958).

"Notley Young's father, Benjamin Young, came to this country about 1734, as Commissioner of Crown lands and became a member of the Governor's council. Soon after his arrival he married the widow of Charles Carroll, the father of Charles Carroll of Carrollsburgh. Notley Young, born about 1736, was thus half-brother to Charles Carroll of Carrollsburgh and half-uncle to Daniel Carroll of Duddington." (p. 401).

"Both Notley Young and his father-in-law, Nicholas Digges, were chosen in 1776 as members from Prince George's County for the Committee of Examination and Observation, later known as the Committee of Safety." (p. 402). His first wife, Ann Casenave (daughter of Peter Casenave) gave him six children. He married Mary Carroll in 1782.

Notley Young was one of the "original proprietors" who sent a letter to George Washington on March 29, 1791 agreeing with the plans for the nearby Federal City and pledging their land at an equitable price, of 12.10.0 pounds per acre, except for streets. But he was also among five (including also Robert Peter) who later refused to sign the deeds, since the government plans required far more land than they expected and thus (he and the others felt) the sale price would be much less. They ultimately agreed, but new problems arose in Pierre L'Enfant's sweeping plans, which included tearing down existing houses in the way of projected streets. "One house that Major L'Enfant, in his zeal, did not demolish, was the Notley Young house. It stood right in the middle of G Street, between 9th and 10th, according to L'Enfant's street lay-out... [This house had been built about 1750.] Notley Young was one of the nineteen "original proprietors" who had made substantial concessions when they agreed to surrender part of their lands for the proposed Federal City. In consideration thereof, they had relied upon assurances, specified or implied, that their interests would be respected in the still embryo scheme of city development.

"Notley Young's house with its numerous dependencies...were valued by the city at \$15,000. One can readily understand

his indignant concern at having his dwelling represented as a "nuisance to the city" [by L'Enfant], especially when all the region around was totally undeveloped and the scheme for that part of the District was still readily susceptible of change...." (p. 401).

"It is scarcely necessary to say that generous and genial hospitality always characterised the Young plantation, a domestic condition vividly presented in General Washington's mind when he wrote the Commissioners deploring L'Enfant's desire to pull down a house in which he had passed many pleasant hours." (p. 402)

"In the long period before the revolutionary War, when the disabilities imposed on Roman Catholics were still in effect, there were no Roman Catholic churches and the only chapels were in some of the larger private homes or on their estates.... Notley Young's abode was one of the great houses that served for many years as a place of worship. There was no separate chapel in the house...but when the people in the neighborhood knew that a priest was coming, they flocked to attend Mass in the big parlours." (p. 403) Notley Young died in 1803; his house was demolished in 1856.

2. Biographical note on Richard Parrott:

In his Chronicles of Georgetown, D.C., 1751-1878 (Washington, D.C., R. O. Polkinhorn, 1878), Mr. Richard Jackson relates an incident which involved Mr. Parrott. "On the 26th of September, 1810, an ordinance was passed authorizing Richard Parrott to make a rope to survey the width of the Potomac River." The rope was duly made, was anchored on one shore, and men on the other began to pull the rope tight. It could not be done however: "the whole town could not draw the rope into a straight line." It finally had to be pulled ashore and the Potomac was left unmeasured. (p. 37).

3. Biographical note on John Mountz:

John Mountz (1771-1857) was the corporation clerk of Georgetown from 1789 to 1856, essentially his entire life, and lived at about 3062 M Street. Because of his official position, his name appears at times in deeds referring to Georgetown transfers. He was also a member of the Georgetown Potomac Lodge No. 9, and was Secretary in 1794. He was one of the old members of the lodge who, in 1854, attested that the marble gavel held by the lodge was indeed, to the best of his knowledge, the one used by George Washington in laying the corner stone of the Capitol on September 18th, 1793

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(Jackson, Chronicles of Georgetown, p. 277) Mr. Jackson comments on this long lived public servant: "Mr. Mountz became disqualified for the active duties of clerk by advanced age, but was still retained by our corporate authorities as consulting clerk until the 1st of August 1857 when he died at an advanced age." (p. 58).

The Georgetown Assessment records for 1800-07 (National Archives Microcopy 605, Group 351, roll 7) include the following:

John Mountz Sr.

1 lot on Bridge Street with improvements	1200
1 lot on Washington with improvements	1000
1/2 lot in Beatty and Hawkins Addn	40
3 negroe men	400
1 negroe woman & 2 children	140
1 cow	10
furniture	120
	<u>\$2910</u>

John Mountz Jr.

furniture	80
1 cow	20
	<u>\$100</u>

4. For biographical information on Anthony Reintzel, see HABS No. DC-153.
5. For biographical information on Henry Foxall, see HABS No. DC-145.
6. Mrs. Gertrude Ochs, the present owner, who lived with the Mason family that owned both 1072 and 1074 since about 1880, relates that the family made carriages, and that the brick shop at the back of 1072 was used for finishing. George W. Mason, the head of the family, had his first shop at M and 28th Street, and then moved to Thomas Jefferson Street. He had 5 sons and 2 daughters, and each one did a different part of the carriage. The last son died about 1949, and daughter about 1964. (Interview, September 7, 1967. Mrs. Ochs lived with the family about 32 years.)
7. Washington city directories provide the following tenant information:

1915-19	Charles C. Hickerson
	Thomas J. Wintermeyer
1921-23	Mrs. Emma E. Wintermeyer
	Charles C. Hickerson

1925	Charles C. Hickerson
1927	Naomi Hickerson
1929-31	Charles Hickerson
1933	John E. Clementson
	Charles Hickerson
1935-37	John E. Clementson
	Charles C. Hickerson
	rear, 1072-74, Samuel Harrison, auto painter
1939-41	Charles Hickerson
1943	Charles Hickerson
	Barrow Lyons
1948	Joan E. Davitt
	Barrow Lyons
1954	J. Harry Brogden
1956-62	Edward B. Vaughan Jr.
1965	John Learmont

Prepared by Daniel D. Reiff
Architectural Historian
National Park Service
September, 1967

PART II. ARCHITECTURAL INFORMATION

A. General Statement:

1. Architectural character: One of the few clapboard houses left in the waterfront area, is representative of late 18th and early 19th century domestic architecture.
2. Condition of fabric: The building has not been well-maintained; some deterioration is evident in all materials.

B. Description of Exterior:

1. Overall dimensions: The main rectangular section of wood measures 20'5" (facade) by 31'1)" with a brick ell from the west side extending 30'0" (flush with the north side of the house). The ell in turn has a small lean-to addition of 6' at its west end. The facade has three bays, east elevation one; the ell has three bays on the south side. Two and a half stories in the main section; two stories in the ell.
2. Foundations: Rubble, stone, and brick form the foundation with three attached brick arches in the basement supporting the chimneys.
3. Wall construction: Beaded siding (clapboarding) painted white covers the facade (east elevation). The clapboards

are 9" wide with 7 1/4" exposed. Asbestos brick siding is found on the south of the main section. Unpainted clapboarding covers the west side of the main section. The brick ell to the west has common bond red brick walls with headers each four rows.

4. Framing: Stud walls and wood framing. The studs are 16" on center. At the southeast corner of the house (where a clapboard is missing) the interior plaster on lath is visible, as well as a 45° diagonal corner brace of wood attached to the corner post 6' from the ground.
5. Porches, stoops, bulkheads, etc: The opening to the basement has masonry retaining walls with steel doors and wooden stairs.
6. Chimneys: Two rectangular brick chimneys (now covered with concrete) rise inside the south wall of the main structure: a large rectangular common bond brick stack is attached inside the west wall of the ell.
7. Openings:
 - a. Doorways and doors: The east elevation contains two, five panel wooden doors painted black; one in the center and the other near the north corner. The central one is flanked by black double panel, fixed louver shutters. Above is a rectangular single light transom. The northern door has no shutters, but the casing is painted black. Its transom is rectangular and composed of four lights.
 - b. Windows and shutters: Windows on the facade are nine/six (first floor) and six/six double hung and flanked by black single panel fixed louver shutters. Nine over six double hung wooden windows occur on the south side of the main structure. Wood frame double hung six/six windows are evident on the brick ell. Shutters have vanished but S shaped metal catches remain.
8. Roof:
 - a. Shape, covering: A gable roof on the main section with north-south ridge is covered by metal roofing painted red. The ell's roof slopes down from north to south and the small lean-to on the rear of the ell slopes down toward the west; both have tarred metal roofs.

- b. Cornice, eaves: Wooden moldings crown the simple wooden box cornice above which is a rounded metal gutter on the east side. On the south eave of the addition is a rounded metal gutter.
- c. Dormers, cupolas, towers: A dormer with a metal covered gable roof is centrally located on the east slope of the roof; two others are symmetrically placed on the west slope. They all contain six/six double hung windows.

C. Description of Interior:

1. Floor plans:

- a. First floor: The northern doorway enters a stair hall that runs the length of the north side, with the stairs in the northwest corner. The hall connects with the living room by a door now closed off. The middle doorway enters the first floor living room, behind which is a second similar room. The ell, reached by a door in the west wall, is divided into three sections: a large bedroom, then a toilet and shower, through which one reaches the large kitchen at the rear of the ell.
- b. Second floor: The second floor living room runs the length of the east side, and is entered from the stair hall, as is the rear room. In the ell is a bedroom, followed by a kitchen with a toilet built into a southwest corner closet.
- c. Third floor: A bedroom runs the length of the east wall; the stairway and hall, and a storage room occupy the rear half.

- 2. Stairways: Wooden dog-leg stairs are located in the northwest corner of the house; 9 1/2 inch treads and 6 1/2 inch risers. Simple square newel posts and small rectangular balusters support a circular handrail. The balusters fit into a groove in the bottom of the handrail. Under the treads are applied curved wooden reliefs. First to second floor is a run of 10 and 6.
- 3. Flooring: The original six and seven inch wood plank flooring is still in use.
- 4. Wall and ceiling finish: All are plaster.
- 5. Doorways and doors: Original six panel wooden doors with simple molded architraves.

6. Decorative features and trim: Molded architraves about the doors and windows, curved wooden stringer reliefs, simple chair and base moldings, and simple reeded mantels comprise the decorative features.
7. Notable hardware: Early lock boxes, hinges, shutter catches, and five star-shaped tie rod plates make up the hardware.
8. Lighting: Modern incandescent.
9. Heating: The simple wooden mantels (now painted white) about the fireplaces are all similar with reeded pilasters, reeded frieze panels, and molded ledges. The four fireplaces are still used along with electric heaters to heat the house.

D. Site:

1. General setting and orientation: The house is located on the west side of Thomas Jefferson Street between M Street and the Chesapeake and Ohio Canal. It is part of a small, attractive residential cluster located on either side of the street.
2. Enclosures: A modern fence encloses the rear brick court.
3. Outbuildings: None.
4. Walks: On the east side is a herringbone red brick walk.
5. Landscaping: A parking lot is to the south; trees shade the side and front of the house.

Prepared by William R. Gwin
Student Assistant Architect
National Park Service
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